

**March 12, 2010**

**Ellen Perkins Simpson  
Executive Director  
Friendship Service Center of New Britain, Inc.**

Good morning. My name is Ellen Perkins Simpson and for twenty six years I've been the Executive Director of the Friendship Service Center in New Britain. Over those years, our agency has provided service to many of those Bill 405 addresses – the frequent users of costly state and local services.

In New Britain, I've watched many die because of the inability to conquer the disease of substance abuse. From a social service perspective, this is very painful and their needs to be a better way. From a fiscal standpoint, there just has to be a better way.

Here are some New Britain statistics for you to ponder.

From March 1, 2009 through February 28 2010 918 persons deemed homeless were transported from the shelters or the streets to the Hospital of Central Connecticut, New Britain General campus, at a real cost of \$489 per trip this amounts to \$448,902.

The cost of the Emergency Department service for these same individuals amounted to \$732,400 for a whopping total of \$1,183, 302.

There just has to be a better way.

How many individuals are we talking about. 20. 20 individuals whose trips to the hospital by ambulance range from 171/year down to 17.

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And we know what that better way is. If we can provide permanent housing with supports for this population, it would save at least two thirds of the

cost. In New Britain, I believe we could virtually eliminate the trips to the ER if we had such a facility – a place the population could call home, a place they would be able to be no matter what their state and a place that would offer treatment whenever one is ready. This solution is not only far most cost effective, but it is more humane to these people who many of us know and have come to love.

I hope you will give serious consideration to this bill. It will save countless millions of dollars and will be something of which we can be proud because we have done the right thing. It is the better way.

Thank you.